

# Kentucky Literacy Link

A Publication of the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE)

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## Keep Your Pumpkin Spice Latte: Grinchy Fall Musings

Mikkaka "MK" Overstreet is a KDE literacy consultant and the editor of this publication. Contact her at [mikkaka.overstreet@education.ky.gov](mailto:mikkaka.overstreet@education.ky.gov).

Most of you are getting used to the quirks of my personality. Among those, you might recall that I disdain cold weather nearly as much as I hate carrots. (I can't stand a carrot!) We've also talked before about how seasonal change can be a mood changer for some people, myself included.

What we didn't discuss before is how this could impact kids. You, dear teacher, wear many hats and among those I know is often therapist. Happy kids learn better. (And happy learners lead to happy teachers.) Here are a few tips I found around the web to help kids beat the blues!

- Make sure your students stay active. Physical activity has been shown to help alleviate the symptoms of depression. Incorporate physical activity into your daily routine—dance during transitions, have scheduled exercise breaks during which students can take turns leading the class in their choice of (preapproved) movements, do certain activities (like morning meeting) standing, etc. ([Source](#))
  - Listen. Kids need someone they can trust and talk to. ([Source](#))
  - Let them know it's okay. Every site I visited talked about the importance of reassuring children that moodiness and sadness are normal and happen to everyone and that we all have to find ways to cope with these feelings. Remember this when you are frustrated with their moods. They're only human.
- If you suspect a child is suffering from depression, talk to your school counselor about resources that you can use in your classroom and/or share with parents. Depression is a real disease and requires real treatment.



## Kentucky Department of Education Updates

Kentucky Core Academic Standards Challenge Issued  
KDE, in cooperation with education advocacy groups across the state, kicked off the [Kentucky Core Academic Standards Challenge](#), a process for collecting feedback on the English/language arts and mathematics standards implemented in 2011. The standards represent what K-12 public school students should know and be able to do at each grade level.

Commissioner Terry Holliday believes this challenge will raise awareness of what the standards actually require students to learn and will solicit specific feedback to inform KDE's regular review process. Between now and April 30, 2015, P-12 teachers, those who work in higher education, parents, students and others who are in-

terested can go [here](#) to read the grade-level standards in English/language arts and mathematics and provide their response to them. The standards are searchable by subject, grade level and keyword. Participants may make suggestions on moving the standard to another grade level, splitting the standard, creating a new standard or rewriting it.

Once the challenge ends, the feedback provided will be posted online and a team of Kentucky educators, from all levels specializing in the specific content areas, will review the suggestions and make recommendations on any changes to the Kentucky Board of Education for its consideration, most likely in fall of 2015. Read more in the KDE news release [here](#).

### Grants to Plan and Promote Early Graduation

A one-time grant opportunity was released on Oct. 15 on the KDE Competitive Grants homepage. These planning grants, which will total \$5,000 each, are meant to promote and encourage collaborative partnerships among high schools and higher education institutions to plan and promote the Early Graduation accelerated pathway with dual credit opportunities. High schools who receive the planning grants will be expected to develop model acceleration pathways that demonstrate alternative options for students to begin challenging college course work at the postsecondary level. Please direct any questions related to Early Graduation to [Kelly Clark](#).



## Spotlight: Wayne County Middle School

Marsha Bertram is a sixth grade writing teacher at Wayne County Middle School. Bertram previously taught in the Monticello Independent school district and was a participant in the Kentucky Leadership Networks in the Southeast South Central region.

*Marsha's article highlights the importance of teaching grammar and conventions in context, rather than as isolated skills to be memorized and drilled. Her lively and creative approach allows students to express themselves creatively, take ownership of their learning and create shared experiences that can be referred and connected to again and again when new learning occurs. In this brief overview, I found evidence of several anchor standards including writing standard 3 (write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences) and several language standards. I hope this lighthearted piece inspires you to new approaches!*

—MK



### Thinking Outside the Standard Teaching Box

During a recent character day at school I stumbled across an idea that I already knew but had failed to realize this year. My students have been struggling with information that, according to ELA standards,

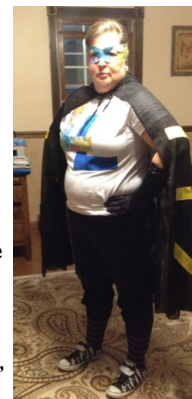
should already be learned and in use. We cannot go forward until I am assured that we have all building blocks in place so the first part of the year has been a huge review. Like most teachers, I wonder at times whether my students are "getting it" or if I am spinning my wheels.

My team of teachers decided that we would dress as superheroes for character day. My alter ego became Language Lady. The assignment of the day was to write an adventure of Language Lady as she fought one of her nemeses. The students could name their own villain or pick from my suggestions on the board. I gave them characters such as Misspell Melvin, No Punctuation Nelly, Comma Drama Curtis, and Run-on Ralphie. There was no minimum requirement other than to produce a complete plot with a beginning, middle and end which included a conflict that was resolved in the story. To be honest, I wasn't sure what to expect. The results stunned me. While we have a long way to go with grammar, sentence structure, and format, these students blew me out of the water with their ability to create and explain. One of the most common conflicts was a robbery of the Word Bank. I lived in places such as Wordville, Grammartown, and Languageopolis. Captured bad guys were taken to the Grammar Slammer. I even lost my powers in one story due to the misspelling of my name but my trusty sidekick – Larry Spellchecker – rescued me from the Grammar Copter. Students asked what powers I possessed and I told them I had whatever powers they gave me. I was given a grammar gun, punctu-

ation darts, a grammar phone with special apps and (my personal favorite) the power to do whatever verb I spoke.

The "aha" moments came when vocabulary we had been working with made its way into the stories. We had predicate thieves, misspelling examples, subject stealers and commas in the wrong place—then fixed! The students were hearing me, but they were much more able to prove that knowledge in the creative environment of the story. I am not advocating that every day be a party in the classroom but neither should every day be so structured that students never have an opportunity to be creative and expressive. Language Lady may visit my classroom throughout the year, at least in conversation. When we worked on run-on sentences the following day, the students had many comments about Run-on Ralphie and how he was losing his power as we corrected sentences.

I guess what I am really saying is that sometimes a fun day can rejuvenate the teacher as much or more than the students. We need to keep believing in the students and giving them opportunities to give back to us, sometimes on their terms and not only on ours.



## Actors Theatre of Louisville New Voices Ten-Minute Play Contest

Actors Theatre unlocks human potential, builds community, and enriches quality of life by engaging people in theatre that reflects the wonder and complexity of our time. Actors Theatre is recognized locally and nationally as the leading arts organization in Louisville and is highly valued as a catalyst for creativity, innovation, inspiration and education in our community and field. Click [here](#) to learn more.

Attention: Kentucky Young Playwrights! Actors Theatre of Louisville is seeking submissions for the 10<sup>th</sup> annual New Voices

Ten-Minute Play Contest. Every year, 8-10 plays written by middle and high school students are chosen from this contest and receive a full production in the New Voices Young Playwrights Festival and publication in the New Voices Anthology.

Submissions of original ten-minute plays are open to all middle and high school students, grades 6-12, from the Commonwealth of Kentucky and the (812) area code of Southern Indiana. Email and snail mail submissions will be accepted. All

entries must be accompanied by a completed cover sheet.

Visit the [contest website](#) for contest guidelines, playwriting tips and submission info. You may also [email](#) Actor's Theatre with your inquiries and requests.

The New Voices Contest and Festival grew out of the New Voices classroom residency, a nine session residency for high school students led by the Actors Theatre of Louisville Education Department. Last year, over 500 students participated

in the program. Our annual New Voices Young Playwrights Contest is open to ten-minute plays written in our residency program as well as those written independently.

The deadline for this year's contest is Oct. 31. Missed the deadline? Send us your play anyway! We'll automatically enter it into next year's contest.

We can't wait to see what you come up with!



## Professional Growth and Effectiveness System News

The following are excerpts from the most recent PGES newsletter, which can be read in its entirety on the PGES webpage, [here](#).

### Quick announcements:

- The K-2 Student Voice Survey will not be administered this year.
- The [TPGES Peer Observation webpage](#) has been updated. Follow the revised [instructions](#) to sign up directly in KET Learning Media. Upon successful completion of the module, the certification is good for three years.
- KTIP teachers, who are not participating in this year's PGES Pilot, should not participate in PGES, but only in KTIP.
- Read Commissioner Holiday's blog: [Apology to Teachers](#).

### New resources posted to the PGES webpages

- [Multiple Superintendent PGES webpage](#)

- [es](#)
- [2014-15 Superintendent Resources and Support](#)
- [EDS Observation Video for Principals](#)
- [TPGES Guidance for Preschool](#)
- [Student Growth Percentile Medians webpage](#)
- [Student Growth Percentile FAQs](#)
- [Student Growth Goals for Coaching Conversations](#)
- [Writing Student Growth Goals in Additional Settings](#)
- [Student Voice Year-at-a-Glance Calendar](#)
- [Other Professionals Sample PGP Goals](#)
- [Other Professionals Sample Student Growth Goals](#)
- [OPGES Pilot Participants Manual](#)

We are now posting a list of new resources towards the bottom of the [PGES webpage](#).

We also tweet about new resources. Please follow us on twitter [@KyPGES](#) for the most up to date information on PGES.



### Questions about PGES?

You may send any questions regarding PGES to [teacherleader@education.ky.gov](mailto:teacherleader@education.ky.gov). We will respond as quickly as possible!

### Are you connected to KDE?

KDE has both a Facebook page and a Twitter feed. Subscribe to the KDE Twitter feed by connecting to [@KyDeptofEd](#), or receive PGES related news by connecting with [@KyPGES](#). Use the hashtag #PGES4Me to join the conversation about educator effectiveness here in Kentucky! Access the KDE Facebook page [here](#) or by searching for "Kentucky Department of Education."

## The Kentucky Informal Educator Science Hub

*It is the long history of humankind (and animal kind, too) those who learned to collaborate and improvise most effectively have prevailed. —Charles Darwin*

The developers of the Kentucky Informal Educator Science Hub are asking for your collaboration as they begin to populate this teacher resource. The goal of the Kentucky Informal Educator Science Hub is to provide a pool of knowledgeable volunteers from a wide range of backgrounds that are willing to offer their time and expertise to work



with local K-12 science educators as they implement the new Kentucky Core Academic Science standards. Please submit the person/organization that has supported you in science education. Once your submission is re-

viewed, a letter will be sent to the person/organization you have named in this form.

If you have any questions related to the Informal Educator Science Hub, please contact Christine Duke at [Christine.duke@education.ky.gov](mailto:Christine.duke@education.ky.gov). Thank you in advance for helping to build this resource for all Kentucky teachers.

Fill out the form online by clicking [here](#).



## 2015 Letters About Literature Essay Contest

[Letters About Literature](#) (LAL) is a reading and writing contest for students in grades 4-12. Students are asked to read a book, poem or speech and write to that author (living or dead) about how

the book affected them personally.

Letters are judged on state and national levels. Tens of thousands of students from across the country enter Letters About Literature each year. Students in grades 4-

12 are eligible to enter the Letters About Literature reading and writing contest.

LAL awards prizes on both the state and national levels. Each participating state center has its own panel of judges who select the top essayists in the state. State winners will receive a cash award and advance to the national-level judging. A panel of national judges for the Center for the Book in the Library of Congress will select one national winner per competition level to receive a \$1,000 cash award.

The judges also will select one national honor per competition level to receive on each competition level to receive a \$200 cash

award.

Grades 9-12 entries must be postmarked by Dec. 15, 2014. Grades 4-8 must be postmarked by Jan. 15, 2015.

Read previous national-winning entries [here](#). Read our state winners in the [May 2014](#) and [May 2013 Literacy Link](#). Click [here](#) for rules and guidelines. To access the LAL teacher's guide, click [here](#). Visit [KDE's LAL page](#) for more information.





## Edivation Strategy: Narrating Positive Behavior Edivation

THE NEW PD360

When instructors verbally highlight positive behavior, a student's clarity level and personal motivation are enhanced.

[Watch teachers](#) in New Orleans and Louisiana demonstrate classroom management techniques that focus on narrating positive student behavior.

While mastering these techniques, these educators' students experienced a positive,

constructive reinforcement of instructions and a non-competitive, non-divisive way to highlight student modeling of expected behavior.

Here are some key elements in narrating positive behavior:

1. Begin by giving clear directions
2. Within several seconds after giving directions, describe 1-2 groups or individuals who are following directions

3. Descriptions should be brief and rarely include overt praise

Secondary students may prefer group rather than individual attention.

This video comes with a [downloadable guidebook](#).

## First Freedom Student Competition- National Essay and Video Contest

The First Freedom Student Competition is now underway. This national essay and video contest offers 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade students an opportunity to compete for \$2,500 awards as they examine the First Amendment and history and implementation of freedom of religion and conscience in American democracy and the world today. Students then present their evaluation in written essay or video format.

This school year, students will select a religion from their local community, state or

region that was or is a minority group. They will research and analyze its history as it encounters issues of religious freedom and equality, and then, by written essay or video production, present their evaluation of how this group's local history compares to the broader narrative of U.S. history and First Amendment law.

For the complete topic, essay and video guidelines, registration, classroom poster, student flyer and other details, visit [www.firstfreedom.org](http://www.firstfreedom.org), and then click on the

First Freedom Student Competition button.

Student online registration is required on or before Monday, Nov.

17, 2014, and the postmark deadline for students to mail their essays or videos with the accompanying entry materials is Monday, Nov. 24, 2014. Winners will be announced on Thomas Jefferson's birthday, April 13, 2015.



## Global Exploration for Educators Organization Teacher Travel Programs



Global Exploration for Educators Organization (GEO) is a non-profit organization that runs professional development travel programs designed for teachers. GEO is offering the following travel programs for 2015: India/Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bali/Lombok, Italy, Eastern Europe, Greece, Uzbekistan, Vietnam/Cambodia, Thailand/Laos, Belize/Guatemala, Morocco (Winter, Spring and Summer) China, Eastern Turkey, Western Turkey, Zambia/Botswana/Namibia/South Africa, New Zealand, Costa

Rica, Peruvian Andes (Summer and Spring), Peruvian Amazon, and The Galapagos Islands. The registration deadline is June 1, but space is limited and many programs will be full well before the deadline.

Educators have the option to earn graduate school credit and professional development credit while seeing the world. The trips are 8 to 19 days in length and are designed and discounted to be interesting and affordable for teachers. GEO provides teachers educational materials and the structure to help

them bring their experiences into the classroom. The trips are open to all nationalities of K-12 and university educators and administrators, as well as retired educators. Educators also are permitted to bring along a non-educator guest.

Detailed information about each trip, including itineraries, costs, travel dates, and more can be found at [www.geeo.org](http://www.geeo.org). GEO can be reached 7 days a week, toll free at 1-877-600-0105 between 9 AM - 9 PM EST.

## Annual Secretary of State Essay & Slogan Contest

Eligible students are encouraged to enter the annual Secretary of State Essay and Slogan Contest. The contest, now in its 26th year, addresses election-related issues in order to expand civic awareness of students who will soon be eligible to vote.

Students in grades 6-8 may enter the voter slogan portion of the contest by submitting an

attention-grabbing word or phrase that expresses the importance of participating in elections. The winning slogans will be chosen by an online poll open to the public, and the overall first-, second-, and third-place winners will receive cash awards of \$1,000, \$600 and \$400 respectively.

Students in grades 9-12 may

take part in the essay portion of the contest, which this year focuses on the role of the media in elections. The University of Kentucky Scripps Howard First Amendment Center, one of the contest's sponsors, will judge the essay entries and a \$1,000 prize will be awarded to the winner in each high school grade level.

Prompts, rules and entry forms for the contests are available on the Secretary of State's [website](#). All guidelines must be met for any entry to be considered by contest judges, and all entries must be electronically submitted by 5 p.m. ET on Dec. 12 or postmarked by that date.



## 2015 Martin Luther King Essay, Poetry and Art Contests

Kentucky students are invited to enter the 2015 Dr. Martin Luther King Junior Essay, Poetry and Visual Art Contests. The theme this year is In His Footsteps...the Dream Today.

Please see the individual contest criteria for the [essay](#), [poetry](#) and [visual arts](#) competition for grade



eligibility requirements as well as the appropriate contest entry form.

All entries must be received by Friday, Nov. 21. The competition is sponsored by the [Governor's Office of Minority Empowerment](#) in cooperation with the Kentucky Department of Education.

### Upcoming Events!

## Upcoming Literacy Events Around Kentucky

### KSTA Annual Conference

The Kentucky Science Teachers Association (KSTA) annual

conference is Nov. 6-8 in Lexington. The 42nd conference promises to be one of the most important in recent years due to the adoption of new standards for science. Science educators from all over the state will share ideas about changes to curriculum, pedagogy and materials that the new standards require. Information and registration forms can be found on the KSTA [website](#).

### 2015 KCTE Conference

The 2015 Kentucky Council of Teachers of English Conference will be held in Lexington on Feb. 27-28. The conference theme is "Balancing Passion and Practice: Kentucky Teachers Leading the Way." Good teaching is as much about passion as it is about best practice. Now more than ever we are asked to evolve, to repurpose our practice to address new standards. We are asked to adapt to new evaluation systems and assessment measures. How do we adapt yet still follow the drive of our passion for learning? How do we build a culture of learning that balances passion and best practice? Join us as we learn how Kentucky teachers are leading the way in education! Click [here](#) to view the featured speaker flyer, read the call for proposals, and submit your proposal online. The deadline for submitting a proposal is Oct. 30.

### LDC Coaches' Institute

Reach Associates will be in Kentucky to offer our first ever LDC Coaches' Institute on October 30 & 31 at the Marriott Griffin Gate in Lexington. This session is intended for teacher leaders, instructional coaches, and administrators who are working with other teachers on implementing LDC tasks and modules. Please see the attached flyer

for more details. Click [here](#) to register.

LDC Coaches' Institute will focus on:

- Effective communication and facilitation skills
- Providing feedback
- Data driven instruction
- Process strategies that can be used in a variety of coaching roles.

The following LDC content topics will also be addressed:

- Aligning the components of the LDC framework with the instructional shifts and demand of the Common Core
- Creating a formative teaching and learning cycle within mini tasks
- Moving from curriculum planning to implementation
- Using student work to plan mini tasks and modules.

### Kentucky Storytelling Conference

The Kentucky Storytelling Conference is November 7-8, Bowling Green, KY. Click [here](#) to register. Registration: \$80 single; \$175 family. The 2014 Conference includes storytelling concerts on both Friday and Saturday nights, plus open-mic opportunities (10 minute time limit), a Friday Late Night Story Slam (no theme; five minute time limit), open mics scattered throughout the day on Saturday, a six-hour pre-conference workshop on Developing Student Storytellers led by [Judy Sima](#), and three workshop sessions:

#### Session 1 (140 minute workshops)

- Making "Sense" of Storytelling. Focus on using the five senses to enhance and improve a story and its telling. Led by [Pam Holcomb](#)
- Storytelling? Yes, You Can! A workshop for beginners, led by [Judy Sima](#)
- Art Your Story. A session about collab-

orating with art museums, led by [Sheila Arnold](#)

- A tour of the Kentucky Folklife Archives on the Western Kentucky University Campus, led by Archives Director Jonathan Jeffrey

#### Session 2 (70 minute workshops)

- Playing with Stories: Storycrafting for Storytellers, Writers, and other Imaginative Thinkers, led by [Kevin Cordi](#)
- Leveling the Playing Field: Storytelling and the Special Needs Classroom, led by [Sherry Norfolk](#)
- Q and A session with Pam Holcomb and Judy Sima

#### Session 3 (70 minute workshops)

- Wordplay: Games that Teach Storytelling Skills, led by [Anthony Burcher](#)
- StorySpotting: Building a Bridge between Folktales and Popular Media, led by [Csenge Virag Zalka](#)
- Lending Voice to Your Ancestors: Telling Their Stories, led by Jo Ann Dadisman

Visit the [KSA website](#) for more information, including a list of area hotels.

### Bread Loaf Teacher Network (BLTN)

BLTN is a network of teachers educated at Bread Loaf and supported during the academic year by Bread Loaf staff and faculty. Its primary goal is to encourage year-round collaboration among Bread Loaf teachers, faculty, and their students on innovative online projects designed to promote culturally sensitive and transformative literacy. All Bread Loaf students, whether they come for just one summer in continuing graduate education or are working on an MA in English, are welcome and encouraged to join BLTN. Click [here](#) for details about the next BLTN meeting.

# Help

Your contributions of ideas and lessons that work are welcome. E-mail [mikkaka.overstreet@education.ky.gov](mailto:mikkaka.overstreet@education.ky.gov) to submit. Your submissions may be included in the Literacy Link to help connect teachers across the state by sharing ideas, insights and best practices.

Access this and past Literacy Links on KDE's website:  
[Click Here](#)



## If you have questions or concerns, we want to help. Contact:

- Rebecca Atkins-Stumbo – Literacy/Early Childhood Consultant – [rebecca.atkins-stumbo@education.ky.gov](mailto:rebecca.atkins-stumbo@education.ky.gov)
- Kelly Clark – Literacy Consultant – [kelly.clark@education.ky.gov](mailto:kelly.clark@education.ky.gov)
- Robin Hebert – Literacy Coordinator – [robin.hebert@education.ky.gov](mailto:robin.hebert@education.ky.gov)
- Kathy Mansfield – Library Media/Textbooks Consultant – [kathy.mansfield@education.ky.gov](mailto:kathy.mansfield@education.ky.gov)
- MK Overstreet – Literacy Consultant – [mikkaka.overstreet@education.ky.gov](mailto:mikkaka.overstreet@education.ky.gov)
- Teresa Rogers – Literacy Consultant – [teresa.rogers@education.ky.gov](mailto:teresa.rogers@education.ky.gov)
- Pamela Wininger – Literacy Consultant – [pamela.wininger@education.ky.gov](mailto:pamela.wininger@education.ky.gov)



## Feedback from the Field



*Your feedback helps us to tailor the Link to best meet the needs of teachers. We want to hear from you! E-mail MK Overstreet.*

"I loved how you started this [September] Literacy Link. Hugs to

you and your family MK!"

–Jennifer

"MK! Job well done! The latest KLL was / is GREAT. There must be a great team working on it. I know how difficult and time consuming this type of work is. I have shared it with my

contacts and encouraged everyone to take advantage of what the KLL has to offer. One thought: Can we hyper-link the table of contents (ToC) on the left of the first page? A "clickable" ToC might make it a bit more user friendly."

–Mike

## Additional Reading and Other Resources

- October is Anti-Bullying Awareness Month and schools and districts are encouraged to increase their awareness of how to address this serious problem. Kentucky schools reported over 15,000 bullying incidents last year and here are some [resources](#) for your school or district and for parents and caregivers to use in order to take action. Contact [Christina.Weeter@education.ky.gov](mailto:Christina.Weeter@education.ky.gov) for more information. Additionally, [attached](#) is a letter from Representative Rita Smart on the importance of addressing bullying as related to the passage of Senate Bill 20 in the 2014 legislative session.
- [Student Portal and Productivity Tools for Teachers](#)—Teachers and students around the country now have full-access to PBS LearningMedia's new student portal and productivity tools. These new tools make it easy to create personalized learning experiences for students to explore inside and outside of the classroom. [See them here.](#)
- [700+ Spanish-Language Resources](#)—PBS LearningMedia now offers over 700 Spanish-language resources designed to strengthen students' language skills and help bilingual learners deepen their engagement with content. [Explore the new resources.](#)
- The New Literacies Collaborative at North Carolina State University is offering a massive open online course (MOOC) entitled, [Disciplinary Literacy for Deeper Learning](#). This course begins October 28th, is free and focuses on secondary teachers.
- Danville schools pushed the envelope on innovation by giving students choices and inspiring them. Read about their amazing work in [Education Week](#).
- For the first time, there's evidence that being fit can improve the speed and connectivity of brain neurons. Read about it in [Time](#) magazine.
- The [Kentucky Historical Society](#) has streamlined its website to help you find in one

place all of the resources we offer you. To find it, start with the "Learn" link in the top navigation bar and click on "Educators' Resources"—or hover over "Educators' Resources" and, in the drop-down menu to the right, go straight to the topic you want.

- For 30 years, [News Quiz](#) has been a trusted current events source for Kentucky teachers. Recently, they launched a new [website](#) to highlight the show's new look. The website now includes links on the main page for each show's story headlines, quizzes, and links for more information. To watch or download an episode you need to click on the show's date then you will be able to stream or download the episode along with viewing the week's quiz questions along with vocabulary terms, headlines, and links. Schools can also stream and download News Quiz episodes through the [Kentucky iTunes U](#) store.

